ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME 7/3/65	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW
ED000865	8410		

4. AUTHOR(S):
Hixon, Lawrence B.

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED:
Independent Study and Teacher Education at Cornell University

6. PUBLICATION TITLE:
The Superior Student

7. EDITOR(S):
N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG. ICSS
ST. 920 Broadway Univ. of Colo.
CITY & STATE Boulder, Colo.
TELE. EXT
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE
Inter-University Committee on the Superior Student

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
5	9-12	Jan-Feb 63	4

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE YES ☒ NO ☐

COPYRIGHT GRANTED YES ☐ NO ☒

COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED YES ☐ NO ☐

TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☒
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR
report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

progress reports	P-23	teacher edu.	Y-20	talent	Y-19
honors programs	S-10	secondary edu.	Y-05	teaching methods	Y-25
independent study	S-14	students	Y-15		

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Progress report of the Inter University Program for honors training of secondary school teachers at Buffalo, Cornell, Rochester, and Syracuse. The program, financed by a Ford Foundation Master of Arts in Teaching grant, is designed to last through 1963. One aspect under exploration is the development of ways to implement study of superior students in teacher education programs.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OR PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

R-7 14. Sml Study [illegible] 8410
x 18 (T-22)

INDEPENDENT STUDY AND TEACHER EDUCATION AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY

A Progress Report by Laurence B. Hixon, Executive Secretary, Inter-University Project I

The Inter-University Program at Buffalo, Cornell, Rochester, and Syracuse is a cooperative honors program for training secondary teachers and is financed by a Ford Foundation Masters of Arts in Teaching grant. Project directors meet once a month and work together under the direction of William Irvine, who holds an appointment at each institution.

With the aid of a grant from the Ford Foundation, the universities of Buffalo, Cornell, Rochester, and Syracuse are cooperatively examining means of improving the professional education of teachers. This project is designed to last through 1966. One aspect under exploration is the development of ways to implement study of superior students in teacher education programs.

FIRST APPROACH

At Cornell one approach to independent study is being explored with 12 sophomores. These young people were selected by a committee representing the School of Education and the Department of English. Their qualifications beyond a desire to become English teachers were determined in terms of academic achievement and potential as expected of honors students in the Cornell Department of English.

During the past summer each of these students was given an extensive reading list in the philosophical and psychological foundations of education. They were encouraged to read these selections "under their own steam" and convenience. As a culminating activity they were required to write a paper about an aspect of the readings which seemed to them to be of particular interest and also important.

On returning to the campus this fall each student registered in an educational seminar for eight credit hours, an amount meeting the New York State certification requirements in the social, philosophical, and psychological foundations of education. The student presented the papers which were prepared in connection with the assigned readings. The papers were discussed by the group and in company with professors representing the disciplines of philosophy, psychology, educational philosophy and psychology.

No final evaluation of this approach has been completed at this writing. Nevertheless, the critical observer is impressed by the high student motivation and acceptance of the program and by the enthusiastic participation of the professors representing the interdisciplinary effort. It would appear at the outset that

8410

ED 000865

a teacher preparation program based on this approach does have a real appeal for the very able student.

SECOND APPROACH

Another approach to independent study with honors students is being undertaken with selected junior, senior, and graduate students in the teaching fields of agriculture, English, home economics, and social studies. The area of trial is also in the philosophical foundations of education.

The selection of these students is based on the fulfillment of at least two of the following requirements:

1. Scholastically in the upper one-third of his college class.
2. Presently in an honor's program.
3. Maintains an academic average of 80 (B) or better.

A chief difference between the two approaches exists in the length of time during which the students are engaged in foundation study. The English, or first approach, is designed to last over the summer months and fall semester of the junior year. The second approach begins with the date of the student's acceptance into the project and ends with completion of either the provisional or permanent teaching certificate and the award of the bachelor's or master's degree.

By agreement with university officials credit for the two four-hour blocks of foundations study has been delayed until the last semester of the student's participation in the project. At that time he registers for the appropriate number of credit hours, and although on paper his total semester load of studies may appear to be much larger than is customarily permitted, his college advisers recognize that the particular situation does not represent an overload—that his study in the foundations actually extends over a number of semesters.

As the initial step in this second approach students met as a group with the two professors representing the philosophical and psychological foundations. Extensive lists of readings were distributed which were considered as far beyond the capacity of any student to read completely. Each student was required to read certain references and encouraged to follow his own interests with others. Schedules for appearances of students in the professional offices established weekly individual conferences concerning their progress and understandings. Variation in schedules was made as needed.

Underlying this approach is the belief that foundation study extended over years rather than semesters provides for greater understanding, particularly when the student is given the opportunity to reflect on philosophical and psychological principles at some length.

It is also considered possible as a working thesis that through extended study educational foundations may be related to more portions of the teacher preparation programs. Students will be in position to look at teaching before, during, and even after they have had their trial at student teaching. They may be able to judge their own educational thinking in a developing teaching situation. The study of foundations in this approach lasts throughout the period when professional education is being considered academically and later experienced in the teaching center as a student teacher.

THE SEPTEMBER EXPERIENCE AND INDEPENDENT STUDY

Each graduate student in the project underwent a two-weeks September experience in a high school for a period beginning with the fall opening of the school. His participation was geared to

independent study and inquiry into six general topics.

1. Aims, goals, and policies
2. Organization and administration
3. Curriculum
4. Teaching and learning
5. Guidance
6. School-community relations

In order to make the September experience applicable to the study of educational philosophy and psychology the students were given an eight-page directive containing reading assignments, persons to interview, and a variety of activities to perform. They were asked to observe teaching, to follow a pupil through a whole day of classes, to interview the principal and a guidance specialist, to take a school bus ride as the bus picks up and delivers pupils, to keep a log book in which to record their observations and impressions. In general, they were told to assume the role of a professional school teacher.

In the directive the students were forewarned that their two weeks experience would serve as a basis for further foundation study.

As a follow-up of the September experience each student wrote a complete report as based on the directives. These reports served as means of discussion in a series of seminars held later in the semester. The seminars were attended by all of the graduate students together with the two professors representing educational philosophy and psychology. It was opportune in the seminars for the reading assignments completed at the teaching centers and subsequent independent study to become the background for the evaluation of the September experience. Greater meaning and understanding of foundation study seems to have been the result; better appreciation of the every day school routine and organization appears to have been another effect.

THE CONCURRENT SEMINAR

As organized in the project the concurrent seminars occur within the same period as student teaching, and are intended to implement instruction in and discussion of content covered in professional education. It is assumed that a seminar concurrent with student teaching provides opportunity for consideration of relationships between the theoretical and practical, in this case independent study of teaching as well as actual teaching.

Plans for the seminars provide for meetings of the Cornell staff, supervising teachers, and student teachers at the several teaching centers and on the campus. In all probability there will be at least eight of these seminars. Intermingled with the seminars will be numerous individual conferences of supervisors and foundations and methods professors with the student teachers. Inasmuch as the semester is just underway, it is not possible to make any evaluations of the worth of the seminars. It is hoped, however, that independent study in both the educational foundations and methodology will be made more meaningful and important in the eyes of the participating students through their close observation and evaluation of everyday teaching experiences. A conception of teaching will be developed, it is felt, which will be based on a combination of theory and practice and represent the best elements of both.

THIRD APPROACH

In the teaching fields of agriculture and home economics attempts are being made to adapt independent study to special methods.

The project innovation in home eco-

nomics is concentrated on methods study complementing the introductory course. Independent study in this field involves the second methods course usually offered concurrently with student teaching. During the first month of the semester students live in the home management residence on campus and cover part of the work in the course by means of programmed instruction especially developed for this project. These students are not made responsible for examinations until the end of the semester. They are permitted to study and review as they wish, requesting individual conferences with instructors as they feel necessary for their full understanding and grasp of the subject.

During the period of student teaching a university supervisor meets with each student once a week in "tutorial session" studying evaluation of pupil learning. Dependence is placed on the cooperating teacher for assistance in understanding of classroom control, production and use of audio-visual aids, and special work in home economics involving laboratory experiences. Throughout the student teaching period individual study is encouraged and abetted by frequent individual conferences with members of the university staff and cooperating teachers.

Independent study in vocational agriculture began with a role study through job analysis of a teacher of agriculture as considered by the staff at Cornell supervising teachers in the field.

The job analysis was the means of identifying the participating experiences of student teachers in agricultural education. This then became the basis of defining the manner for involving students in independent study.

Thirty-eight separate units have been developed. Each unit is a guide for independent study in methods and includes objectives and activities leading toward proficiency in one or more tasks of the agriculture teacher. Included in the units are suggested activities and readings which may be done independently or concurrently with student teaching.

This independent study is carried out in three different settings: pre-student teaching, concurrent with student teaching, and post-student teaching. It is anticipated that portions of independent study will be augmented by programmed instruction.

PROGRESS SUMMARY

This is the first year of actual project operation. Last year was a planning year. Only immediate impressions may be recorded. It is too soon to establish a complete system of evaluation of the worth of the various approaches to independent study in professional education that are being tested on the Cornell campus.

At this point it would appear that the bright student is influenced through independent study and individual conference to read more carefully and for greater understanding. He does not necessarily read more, but he does think more deeply about what he reads.

Students who have been engaged in academic studies, for instance English and history, take to independent studies more readily than those students in the more vocational fields. In both cases, however, it is noted that an initial period of doubt and perplexity is overcome by continued work and study. A later increase in motivation, speed, and spread of reading seems to develop.

There is a certain amount of *esprit de corps*. This is an honors program and the sense of one's being permitted to participate as an honors student appears to be appreciated.